

# Environmentally Preferable Cleaners

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## INTRODUCTION

The cleaners we use in our homes and offices can harm human health and the environment and King County agencies are adopting the use of cleaning products and methods that minimize the risk of harm. We take advantage of guidance provided by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the Washington State Department of Ecology, the Washington Toxics Coalition, the King County Local Hazardous Waste Management Program, and many others who have brought attention to this matter.

Potentially detrimental attributes of cleaners that are being examined by these groups include:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ▪ Aquatic Toxicity   | ▪ Irritation Potential/Corrosivity  |
| ▪ Biodegradation   | ▪ Levels Of Volatile Organic Compounds (Voc's)  |
| ▪ Bioconcentration   | ▪ Reproductive Toxicity – California Toxic Enforcement Act ( <a href="#">Proposition 65</a> ) |
| ▪ Chemicals Listed Under The State Of California's Safe Drinking Water And Carcinogens | ▪ Product Packaging   |
| ▪ Flammability   | ▪ Ozone Depletion Potential   |

According to the EPA, most people spend more than 90 percent of their time indoors; thus, exposure to indoor environmental hazards has led to many health concerns. Choosing less hazardous products can minimize harmful impacts to custodial workers, improve indoor air quality, and reduce water pollution.

## STANDARDS

To aid in the selection of environmentally preferable cleaners, there are now a few environmental standards for cleaning products that are available for use in purchasing specification and the cleaning-products industry has developed new products to meet these rigorous requirements. In addition to meeting these standards, cleaning products must still fulfill the basic requirements of cost and performance.

Following are a few of these standards:

### **Green Seal**

[Green Seal](#), a national non-profit consensus based standard setting organization, has three standards for green cleaners:

- [GS-37 for Industrial and Institutional Cleaners](#)
- [GS-40 for Industrial and institutional Floor Care Products](#)
- [GS-41 Hand Cleaners and Hand Soaps](#)

You can view the standards on their website and find products that have been certified to this standard. Green Seal maintains a third party certification system.

### **EcoLogo**

[EcoLogo](#) is a North American standard and certification program (originated in Canada). They have set criteria and certified various [green cleaning products](#), from hand cleaners to floor cleaners. EcoLogo's environmental standards are verified by a third party auditor.

### **Design for the Environment**

The [Design for the Environment](#) (DfE) Formulator Program encourages companies to reformulate products to be environmentally safer, cost competitive, and effective. To improve a product's environmental and human health profile, a formulator must be able to find suitable alternative ingredients. Those ingredients must have positive environmental characteristics, and the right performance characteristics to be appropriate functional replacements. DfE's Industrial/Institutional Cleaning Partnership has reviewed and approved many industrial/institutional cleaning products, listed on their [website](#).

## **USAGE HISTORY AND EXPERIENCE**



King County agencies have tested and used many cleaners that have been marketed as “green” with varying degrees of success. The market has improved dramatically for environmentally preferable cleaners in the past few years, as standards and certification programs have begun to emerge and more products have become certified. The use of environmental standards will help counter the unsubstantiated marketing claims, often called “greenwashing,” that can be confusing to users.

The program continues to participate in various efforts around the country to facilitate the advancement of reliable standards, certifications, and labeling programs that can make it possible for small jurisdictions and consumers to purchase chemistries that are demonstrably better for worker health and the environment than some we have used in the past.

In 2008, based on outcomes of those efforts, the County awarded contracts to four local vendors for cleaning chemicals that are certified by Green Seal. The Facilities Management Division, the Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention and the Department of Public Health are currently evaluating the performance and price of these certified products.

Initial reports are showing good results. The use of ready-to-dilute systems are proving safer for workers, as they are not directly exposed to the chemicals, and this results in the use of less product to do the same job. These agencies purchased 1,400 cases of these products at a cost of \$86,000. Most of these were sold in concentrate form and then diluted with water, as appropriate for the application.

Metro Transit, which operates over 1,200 buses and maintains seven bus bases and a 1.3 mile transit tunnel, has been evaluating environmentally preferable cleaners for several years, with good results. An unexpected benefit of this evaluation has been reduction of the number of different chemicals used in their bases from dozens to two main multi-purpose cleaner products. The agency reports that they used 1,300 gallons at a cost of approximately \$18,000 of certified, concentrated products for cleaning bathrooms, offices, floors and the bus tunnel.

The agency also adopted the use of microfiber cleaning cloths for all cleaning operations, and report that this change saves water and performs well. The use of microfiber mops has eliminated the use of the mop-buckets full of muddy water, as they are easily laundered where laundry facilities are available..

## **BID AND CONTRACT LANGUAGE**

### **King County Contract**

When new standards of environmental preferability are implemented, user agencies are engaged to establish that the new products continue to meet those basic requirements. Evaluations by King County agencies are showing that performance can be equal, or even superior, to conventional products, at competitive prices. Some users are seeing fewer injury-claims, benefiting worker-health and expense.

King County issued an Invitation-to-Bid in 2007 for Janitorial Cleaning Chemicals. Following is excerpts (shaded area) from the bid document

#### **Schedule 4 – Green Seal Certified Chemicals**

Items bid within Schedule 4 shall be Green Seal Certified GS-37 for Industrial and Institutional Cleaners, GS-40 for Industrial and institutional Floor Care Products, or GS-41 Hand Cleaners and Hand Soaps as indicated on the pricing page. Bidders shall submit proof of certification upon request by King County. <http://www.greenseal.org>

Contractor shall notify King County as new Green Seal Certified product lines become available. The same discount offered for the manufacturer bid shall be extended to new product lines.

#### **A. Training**

Bidders shall offer comprehensive training and materials for the proper use of the chemicals bid including step-by-step instructions for the proper dilution (including chemical dispensing equipment training), use and disposal. Training shall be provided at no additional charge to King County. Bidder shall submit with their bid a description of the training offered to include the following criteria:

- On-site initial training for use of products.
- Ongoing training either on-site or at designated sites throughout King County.
- A phone number, local to Seattle or toll-free, operated by staff knowledgeable of the products bid for a minimum of eight (8) consecutive hours Monday through Friday anytime between 6:00AM and 6:00PM, for departments to call to receive instructions and assistance on product use.
- Description of all available training including the scope.
- Identification of staff and personnel who conduct the training

Training format/tools:

- Instructional procedural video
- Printed resource manual
- Brochures or laminated reference cards

## **B. Labeling**

The manufacturer's label shall state clearly and prominently that dilution with water from the cold tap is recommended and shall state the recommended level of dilution. The manufacturer shall also include detailed instructions for proper use and disposal and for the use of personal protective equipment.

### **1.10 Dispensing Systems**

Bidders shall submit to the County any information describing appropriate and safe equipment for dispensing their product, this shall include price. Chemicals which are to be delivered in drums shall be removed by Contractor when empty at no additional charge to the County. Contractors shall supply the requesting County agency with a removal plan within five (5) days upon verbal request.

Contractors who supply products in drums, shall supply labels of their product which can be affixed to trigger spray bottles.

### **1.11 Additional Items**

The Bidder may offer additional items than those appearing in the Pricing Schedules. The County will evaluate those items separately.

### **1.12 Samples**

The Bidder shall have one (1) week after request, to provide samples. Failure to provide samples when requested shall eliminate Bidder from consideration. King County shall be the sole judge in determining sample quality. The samples shall be returned upon request and at Bidder's expense.

## **SECTION 2 Bid Response**

### **2.5 Pricing**

Note: Please read and follow all instructions carefully. Failure to comply with all pricing instructions may result in disqualification of the bidder.

For ease of evaluation, bidders shall provide pricing for all items on a per unit, oz or ml basis. Bidders shall also, in the space provided, indicate packaging for those items sold in multiple units. For items sold on a per unit basis, packing requirements are not required. King County realizes that packaging requirements may vary per manufacturer. All units with prices at less than \$1.00 shall be rounded to the nearest ten thousandth of a dollar (\$.0023).

Examples:

1. Sponges sold in a package of 5/pack at \$1.50/pack shall be priced at \$.30 each sponge.
2. Packaging: 5/pack; 15 packages/case (if applicable).
3. Liquid Cleaner sold in 32 oz. bottles at \$3.20/bottle shall be priced at \$.10/oz of cleaner.
4. Packaging: 32 oz bottles; 4 bottles/case (if applicable).
5. Sponge Mops sold per mop at \$5.00 each shall be priced at \$5.00 each mop.
6. Items sold in liters shall be priced per milliliters.
7. Packaging: 1 liter bottles/cans; 12 per case (if applicable).

In the event of a discrepancy between the unit price and the extended price, the unit price will prevail. The quantities listed in the solicitation represent the County's estimated requirements during an annual contract period.

Bidders may enter a bid for any or all schedules. However, every item within the schedule for which the bidder is entering a bid shall be priced. If an item has been discontinued and will not be replaced by the manufacturer, state "discontinued" for the price. If an item that has been discontinued and replaced, Bidders may quote the equivalent replacement item and price.

Other sizes of these products may also be purchased.

No substitutions are allowed unless "or equal" is specified. Brand names listed indicate the standard of quality required. Bidders shall indicate equal products in the space provided. Other brands shall be interchangeable with the brands listed without modification. King County will be the sole judge in determining if the product offered is equal to the product specified.

For items listed without a brand name specified, Bidders shall quote their highest quality product fit for commercial use.

King County reserves the right to purchase other products not listed, but may be available from the Contractor. Bidders shall offer a discount for all other products available through their catalog. The final item in Schedules 1 – 3 represent the County's estimated usage for other janitorial supplies not directly specified. The discount offered shall be applicable for all sections of the catalog(s).

#### **Pricing Schedule 4 – Green Seal Certified Cleaners**

A catalog of the items shall be submitted with the bid response, indicating the manufacturer's suggested dilution ratio.

Estimated annual usage for this schedule is approximately \$60,000. King County will not be limited, restricted or bound by this dollar value.

The percentage discount bid shall be the same for all Green Seal certified items within the manufacturer's Green Seal Certified product line(s).

If a dispensing unit is required by the manufacturer for dispensing any item within this schedule, submit specifications and pricing for the unit.

Bidders are encouraged to bid multiple product lines (use additional sheets as necessary).

##### Green Seal Environmental Standard for Industrial and Institutional Cleaners (GS-37)

This standard establishes environmental requirements for industrial and institutional general-purpose, bathroom, and glass cleaners.

##### Green Seal Environmental Standard for Floor-care Products - Industrial and Institutional Cleaners (GS-40)

This standard establishes environmental requirements for industrial and institutional floor care products

##### Green Seal Environmental Standard for Hand Cleaners/Hand Soaps (GS-41)

This standard establishes environmental requirements for industrial and institutional hand cleaners and hand soaps.

Item	Est. gallons	Description	Brand Mfg Part#	Size, Packaging and Dilution ratio	List Price
1	1000	Bathroom Cleaner (GS-37)			
2	1000	All-purpose Cleaner (GS-37)			
3	1000	Glass Cleaner (GS-37)			
4	1000	Floor Cleaner (GS-37)			
5	1000	Multi-surface Cleaner (GS-37)			
6	500	Carpet Extraction Cleaner (GS-37)			
7	100	Floor Seal & Finish (GS-40)			
8	200	Floor Stripper (GS-40)			
9	100	Soap, Hand (GS-41)			
10	\$10,000	Discount off supplier's catalog for other Green Seal Certified items	N/A		

#### Pricing Schedule 5 – H2Orange2 Multi-purpose cleaner NO SUBSTITUTIONS

Item	Est. Qty	Description	Brand Mfg Part#	Size, Packaging and Dilution ratio	Unit Price
1	30	H2Orange2 Multi-purpose Concentrate #117, 55 Gallon Drum			
2	100 ea	H2Orange2 Multi-purpose Concentrate #117, 1 Gallon Container			

Other jurisdictions with contracts for environmentally preferable cleaners:

#### [City of Seattle's RFP for Environmentally Preferable Janitorial Cleaning Products](#)

The City of Seattle awarded a contract for environmentally preferable janitorial cleaning products. Please see the RFP for more information and the environmental criteria used. A summary of award is also available on the city's website.

#### [State of Massachusetts RFR for Environmentally Preferable Cleaning Products](#)

The State of Massachusetts was one of the first jurisdictions to specify and use Green Seal certified chemicals.

## **State of Washington Janitorial Products Contract**

The State of Washington awarded a contract using the [Western States Contracting Alliance](#) (WSCA) contract for janitorial products with dispensers, service, testing and training. This contract includes Green Seal certified cleaning chemicals.

## **City/County of San Francisco, California**

Contract for environmentally preferable cleaning products

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

[Green California – Cleaning Products](#)

[Responsible Purchasing Network Cleaning Purchasing Guide](#)

[Janitorial Products Pollution Prevention Project](#)

## **VENDOR INFORMATION**

Current King County vendors:

- Davidson Distributing - [B20278B](#)
- Unisource - [B20276B](#)
- Walter E. Nelson - [B20279B](#)
- West Coast Paper - [B20277B](#)
- [EcoLogo Certified Cleaning Products](#)
- [Green Seal Certified Cleaning Products](#)
- [Green Seal Certified Hand Cleaners](#)
- [Green Seal Certified Floor Care](#)